Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows.

Amend the paragraph on page 10, lines 12-14, as follows:

As another method of improving the impact strength, a ~~softening component~~ flexibilizer may be used. For such ~~softening component~~ flexibilizer, known substances can be used and examples thereof include the ~~followings~~ following.

Amend the paragraph on page 11, lines 1-5, as follows:

The ~~softening components~~ flexibilizers described above can absorb the energy at impact. Generally, addition of a ~~softening component~~ flexibilizer leads to decrease in heat resistance, but by using kenaf together, both the heat resistance and the impact strength of the biodegradable resin can be improved.

Amend the paragraph on page 11, lines 6-11, as follows:

As a method of improving impact strength, high strength fiber can be used. Examples of high strength impact resistant fiber include polyamide such **as** aramid and nylon, polyesters such as polyallylate and polyethylene terephthalate, ultra-high strength polyethylene, polypropylene, teflon® fiber such as PTFE, carbon fiber and metal fiber.

Amend the paragraph on page 27, lines 14-28, as follows:

A bast fiber (average fiber length 3 to 5 mm, hereinafter bast fiber 2) from which fragments were removed, a bast fiber having an average fiber length of 5 mm (hereinafter bast fiber 3), a ~~softening component~~ flexibilizer (available from Dainippon Ink and Chemicals, Incorporated, PD-150) and polylactic acid (available from Shimadzu Corporation, Lacty 9030) were each dried at 100°C for 5 hours, and melt-kneaded according to the composition shown in Table 2 using a kneader (S1 Kneader made by KURIMOTO, LTD. kneading temperature: 180°C) to give pellets. The obtained pellets were dried at 100°C for 5 hours and molded into test pieces (125 × 13 × 3.2 mm) using an injection molding machine (made by TOSHIBA MACHINE CO., LTD, EC20P-0.4A, molding temperature: 180°C, metal mold

temperature: 25°C). The obtained test pieces were left in a thermostat chamber at 100°C for 4 hours and cooled to room temperature and the notched Izod impact strength was measured.

Amend the paragraph beginning on page 27, penultimate line, and ending on page 28, line 2, as follows:

As shown in Example 7 of Table 2, the impact strength was improved by the use of the ~~softening component~~ flexibilizer. As shown in Examples 8 and 9, removal of fragments also led to improvement in the impact strength.